

n *Tucker*
3538
WALKING WITH GOD, CONSIDERED AND
IMPROVED,

I N A
S E R M O N,

DELIVERED AT
N E W B U R Y,

APRIL 29, 1792.

OCCASIONED BY THE DECEASE OF THE
REV. JOHN TUCKER, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH THERE.

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE,

MARCH 22, 1792.

BY *K* JONATHAN EAMES, A. M.

PASTOR OF A CHURCH IN
NEWTOWN, NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

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THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

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A
FUNERAL SERMON.

GENESIS V. 24.

*AND ENOCH WALKED WITH
GOD, AND HE WAS NOT;
FOR GOD TOOK HIM.*

THE Deity hath never been without some to seek and serve him.

THE passage read, is the record of one of his pious votaries, who lived, in an early age of the world. St. Jude calls him the seventh from Adam. Remarkable was this person: and remarkable was his exit.

HE was a man of eminent virtue.

NOTWITHSTANDING the general corruption of manners, which prevailed among men, in his day, he stood his ground. Like as the firm rock, which stands unshaken amidst the rushing elements, so he bore up against the common stream of practice, nobly maintaining his virtue; by

which singular conduct, he condemned the world, and approved himself to God. And having, through grace, distinguished himself, by exemplary goodness, the Most High, who loveth righteousness, was pleased to distinguish him, by a translation to heaven, without tasting death. To heaven, I said, he was taken. The text, indeed, does not say so much, but only, that God took him. Yet, considering the affirmation, in connexion with his character, we are constrained to think, that he was really taken to the paradise above.

THE great God, many times, is wont to honor singular virtue, even in this world.

SACRED history acquaints us of his protecting the persons of several, eminently religious characters, by a special providence; when thousands have fallen at their side, and ten thousands at their right hand.—We are not to think, however, that it was, merely for Enoch's sake, on account of any uncommon sanctity, which he possessed, that this singular favour was granted him. Although, we cannot but imagine, that to reward *this*, was one thing designed, by God, in his translation; yet, doubtless, his principal design in this extraordinary providence, related to others; and more especially, to such as lived at

the same period of the world, that the patriarch did.

ONE design might be, to comfort and support people, in their condition of mortality and misery. Death had made its entrance into the world, and was making ravages every where.—No question, they who lived, at that day, were deeply affected with the prospect of a dissolution; especially, as all evidence of a future existence sprung, not from any express revelation from heaven, but from the reasonings of their own minds, which, one would think, must have come very short of giving full satisfaction.—But, allowing that the soul's existence, in a future state, might be learned from the principles of natural reason, to the full content of the thoughtful and inquisitive—yet, it must have been a painful prospect of leaving the body, the dear companion of the soul, to dust and worms, never to rise: and any other prospect they could not entertain, without some evidence, above what natural light could afford them. Hence, we may suppose, that God, in great tenderness to mankind, was pleased, by an extraordinary act of providence, to assure them, that there was a state to succeed the present, in which, they should live again—and in which, they who walk with him, in this world, should be happy.

BUT the principal design, we may suppose, aimed at, by the Deity, in the translation of Enoch, was, to restrain the vices of men, and to encourage virtue.—The human race had fallen into a very dissolute condition—wickedness prevailed, and ran down like a river, as was just noticed.—Consequently, the world stood in need of something, above what it then enjoyed, to give a check to growing immorality, and excite men to, and strengthen them in, religion.

Now, as nothing is of equal importance to effect these ends, like arguments taken from another world, we do very rationally conclude, that God had a view to this, in the wonderful dispensation before us.

CONSIDERING the darkness and ignorance that then overspread the world, and the almost universal prevalency of vice, it is highly presumable, that some were infidels, as to the momentous doctrine of the saints' creed (a state of future retribution) others wavering, and but few full in the belief of it. The baser sort might scoffingly say, who is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what profit shall we have, if we should lay restraints upon our inclinations—deny ourselves and live not for this world, but for another?

Now, these, and all, must have been convinced, from the translation of Enoch, that the doctrine of a state of rewards and punishments beyond the grave, was no idle dream, but a doctrine very credible; and therefore, that it was a most dangerous thing to indulge to vice, and to lead careless, and ungodly lives.

FOR, really, it was none other, than a sensible proof of another world—a demonstrative argument of the Divine regards to sincere goodness—a clear intimation, that those, who serve God, in body and spirit, upon earth, shall, in body and spirit, be glorified in heaven.

THUS, some of the great and good designs of God, in the translation of his servant Enoch, have been modestly conjectured.

IN further discoursing upon our subject,

- I. I shall, first, attempt a brief delineation of the character therein contained.
- II. AND, secondly, I shall consider the signal favour annexed to it.
- I. FIRST, I shall attempt a brief delineation of the character contained in our subject.

It is contained in a few very expressive words. Enoch walked with God. Walking, in a literal sense, implies the motion of the body from one place to another.

INSPIRED writers use the phrase in a figurative sense, to denote the behaviour of men, in a moral view. They tell us of men's walking, in the imagination of their hearts; according to the course of this world; according to the prince of the power of the air," meaning, that they open their hearts to vice; follow the lead of appetite and passion; opposing and insulting the Divine moral government.

THEY tell us also of men's "walking in the truth;" "in the laws of the Lord;" in God's statutes and judgments," meaning a course of life, directly the reverse of that just mentioned.

AND thus did Enoch walk. His heart was right with God—and his life was a transcript of his moral perfections. He was very happy, in the ideas he imbibed, respecting the blessed God. How he came by them, I shall not undertake to determine; whether in a way more ordinary, or extraordinary; whether, by a particular revelation, or from the things that are seen. However, this must be granted, that his apprehensions of him were just and noble. Hence, he loved his character, and with an hearty affection to him, and to his service, gave up himself to the Lord Jehovah, to fear, love, trust in, and obey him in all things. And agreeably to this dedication,

he conducted himself. At all times, and in all places; in his retirements from the noise and hurry of a busy world, as well as when acting upon the open theatre of it, his great care was, to conform his temper and actions, to the Divine will.

It must be granted, that all God's children have had their moral blemishes, Enoch not excepted. However, human frailties excepted, he stood in a qualified sense, perfect and complete, in the whole will of God.

THE plain language of the text necessarily implies, that he possessed a *right spirit* toward God, and led a life *correspondent* thereto.— Can two walk together, except they be agreed? * says the prophet. The question implies a strong negation, to the truth of which, the oracle of our own breast bears testimony. Scarce any thing is more clearly dictated to us, by the light and reason of our own minds, than that a likeness of disposition and manners, is the great basis of agreeable fellowship and communion.

WE see, in a moment, that light cannot have fellowship with darkness, nor Christ, or God, with Belial.

* Amos iii.—3.

BESIDES, the honourable testimony which the Author of the epistle to the Hebrews gives of Enoch, may be adduced, as an invincible proof of the point under consideration. His words are, "Before his translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased God." This could not have been true, had he not been a man of a thorough good character.

GOD will have the submission of the heart, without which nothing in the life and conversation, can be well-pleasing to him. And no wonder! for, the most specious external appearances of religion, without the reality, in the heart, are none other than the shell and carcase of it, without the life, or substance.

ALTHOUGH actions *good*, as to the matter of them, are to be encouraged; yet, it must be granted, that none can be pleasing to God, any further, than they flow from a sense of, and a regard to, him. Reason, as well as scripture, teaches, that religion ever did, and must spring from God, and centre in him. It may be worthy of notice here, that the same apostle says, further, concerning this patriarch, "By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death." Now, this faith, of which such *notice* was taken, we are constrained to think, was of an extensive in-

fluence, purifying the heart, as well as reforming the life.

AND the truth, no doubt, was, that, taken in connexion with the good and useful passions, which it awakened up in his mind, and called forth to his aid, it formed him to a complete, religious character.

As I conceive of the matter, the belief and sense he entertained of the Divine perfections, were such, as that he was affected and influenced by them, suitably to their respective natures.—While God's attributes of majesty and greatness, such as power, holiness and justice, excited in him a holy awe and fear, which made him dread his displeasure—his mild and gentle attributes, such as love, mercy and goodness, engaged his hope and trust in him, and attracted his highest veneration and love.—Hence, he was won to God, and walked with him. Thus have we considered a holy walk with God, with a particular reference to Enoch.

ARE any disposed to enquire, what may the character import, when applied to christian professors? I answer, nearly the same; for, they have the same God to walk with, that Enoch had, the same prevailing good disposition toward him, and unreserved dedication of themselves to

him are required—and also, the same governing principle of action. The christian, as well as Enoch, must walk by faith, not by sight. But then, it must be carefully observed, that the christian professor and Enoch, have not the same rule of faith : the gospel is our rule of faith and manners, but it was not his.

It might be sufficient for his, and his cotemporaries' acceptance, upon the plan of grace, to attend to the volume of nature, and from thence, spell out the invisable things of God—learn their duty, in its various branches, together with the arguments to practise it ; and in the sincerity of their hearts, give up themselves to God ; and conscientiously act, in conformity to the best light and knowledge they were in a capacity to obtain.

BUT we, who have the volume of inspiration put into our hands, must attend to that. Not, indeed, to a total exclusion of that of nature ; but, the *word of God*, more especially the *gospel*, must be our great and governing rule. By this, we are to form our sentiments of the blessed God. Here, we are to learn what we are to believe and practise in general, as to all matters and things relating to us as Sion's travellers.—And from hence, we are to furnish ourselves with

motives to excite us to, and animate us in, a religious course of life. In a word, our faith must be evangelic—our tempers, and the general tenor of our actions the same—taking their rise from gospel-arguments. In this, in my apprehension, lies the whole difference between walking with God as christians, and as Enoch did.

THERE is one property, belonging to this holy walk, common to all engaged in it, which I must just mention; I mean progress. The phrase to walk, as applied to the body, denotes progress, and when used in a metaphorical sense, as in the text, it implies as much. Not to grow better, is commonly to grow worse. This does not comport with the character of one bound for heaven, and who professes to be on his way thitherward.

THE wise man likens “the path of the just to the rising light, which shines more and more unto the perfect day.”† And experience confirms the propriety of this comparison. The progress of all, 'tis true, is not the same. Some walk with nimbler steps than others, and go a great way in a little while. Good habits strengthen apace. All christian graces ripen—and their character grows more and more reputable and useful.

† Prov. iv.—18.

BUT where is the real christian, who is entirely at a stand? Many there are, who go on slowly and heavily—their obedience is not uninterrupted, but attended with many relapses; notwithstanding, by degrees and in the main, they gain ground upon their corruptions, and really are in a progressive state toward perfection.

It is more than time, that we pass to the other thing proposed, which is,

II. Secondly, to consider the signal favour of providence vouchsafed to Enoch. "God took him." We may consider the favour, not as peculiar to the patriarch, but as common to all of his character. It is expressly said of him, that, "God took him," and the assertion holds true, with respect to all that walk in his steps—God has, does, and will take them. Do any ask, whither will he take them? I answer, to himself, or to the same happy regions, where Enoch was taken—not indeed, in the same manner, he did him—not without seeing, or tasting death—No, my hearers. It is appointed to man once to die.* But two, since the creation of man upon earth, have been, without tasting death, caught up alive, in their united nature, into the unseen world; Enoch, under the dispensation of nature, and Elijah, under the dispensation of

* Heb. ix.—27.

the law. Indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ, under the dispensation of the gospel, ascended to heaven in his whole man ; but not without first submitting to the laws of mortality.

AND it is worthy of notice here, that although this Divine person hath taken part with us, against our last enemy, and is said to have abolished death (which is true in a large sense) yet, he has procured none an exemption from it—no, not even his dearest friends and favourites. In this, they must be conformed to him, their Head. As he passed through the dark valley, and drank of the bitter cup, so must they.

*“ The tall, the wise, the rev’rend head,
Must lie as low as ours.”*

THE sentence of death, pronounced against Adam, extends to us, it stands unrepealed, and must be executed upon all, the last generation of men that shall stand up on this earth, only excepted.

BUT, notwithstanding, there is no discharge in this war, and our bodies must fall a prey to death, and be left in great obscurity, God will, at death, provided we walk with him, take our better part, the soul, to himself. Death shall have no sooner done its office, and thrown down these houses of clay, than our spirits shall wing their way to

God, who gave them. Yes, my hearers, then, by the ministration of good angels, our souls shall be convoyed to the world of rest and enjoyment, to be forever with the Lord.

THUS he took the soul of his dear Son, when he died a sacrifice for sin, and that of the penitent thief, who suffered with him, when their bodies were left hanging on the cross.

THUS, he took the soul of St. Stephen, when his body fell under a shower of stones.

THUS, he hath taken the souls of all Godly ones, in all periods of the world, at their dissolution. And thus he will continue to do, to the consummation of all things.

AND can we reasonably wish for any thing beyond this? To be sure, this should content us. I would ask, is it very material, whether the body be immediately taken up, together with the soul? What if it does tarry behind, for a season? The soul is the Person, and if it be well with that, it matters not so much for the body. But, however the matter may appear to us it is *enough* for the present, that God shews the souls of such as walk with him, the path of life, while he leaves their flesh to rest in hope, until the resurrection.

Our subject would admit of a useful improvement.

IN reflecting upon it, and what hath been offered from it, we are naturally led into an examination of ourselves, with respect to our course of action, in a moral view, whether we are walking with God, and are in the way which leadeth to life ; or whether we are walking contrary to him, in the broad road, which leadeth to death.

THESE are points of enquiry, of too much importance, not to be settled. Painful, and even shocking is the thought, that any should walk on in the dark, or in a course of life, of which they know not the issue.

SURELY, we should not rest, without such a testimony as Enoch had—that we do so walk, as to please God. No, we should not rest, without the most rational and satisfactory evidences, that we are so interested in his love, through Christ, as that he will remember us, in our expiring moments, with the favour he bears to his chosen, and receive our immortal spirits, when dislodged from the body, to the arms of his mercy, and joys of his kingdom.

It might be noticed also, that our subject contains an argument of singular energy to influence men to religion. Such as are strangers to it, must, I think, find themselves urged to enter upon an holy walk with God.

THOSE of this character, unless they be strangely stupid, and fool-hardy, must tremble at the thought of being, in the gloomy trying season of death, deserted by God, and left, immediately upon their souls quitting the body, to fall into the hands of evil angels, to be dragged by them to the place of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, forever. All those of this unhappy character, must, upon a moment's reflection, conceive of it as a thing infinitely desirable, when they come to die, to have God stand by them, and upon breathing their last, to find themselves in the hands of good angels, to be conducted to the place, exempt from misery, and replete with happiness. Under the present view of things, can any think of persisting, in their own forbidden way? Can any of you do any other, "than turn your feet into the way of God's commands, and walk with him?"

For your encouragement, let me assure you, God's grace in, and by the gospel, is sufficient for you, to which you may be welcome. O implore it, and improve it, and become wise and happy. I might add, our subject, and what hath been offered from it, are adapted to animate those in religion, who have entered upon it.—Who of us do not need quickening? Are not

the best ready to load themselves with severe censures, that they have kept up no closer walk with God? Do they not, at times, let down their watch and guard, and suffer evil passions and affections to grow upon them? Do they not, at times, remit as to zeal and diligence, and go on in a heartless manner? In a word, how little hath there been, at seasons of the *life* and *power* of *religion*, to distinguish their walk, from that of other men?

WHAT we have been hearing, can hardly fail, if duly attended to, of having a desirable effect.

SURELY, the prospect of being caught up to God, and introduced into an exceeding great and glorious happiness, must inspire us with such an holy warmth and animation of soul, as that we shall run, and not be weary, walk and not faint.

BUT I hasten to the main thing which led me to make choice of the subject before us, to discourse from at this time. This, you are all apprised, was, to do honor to the memory of your late worthy pastor, and my dear friend. And you at once see that the character therein contained, applies to him. In my apprehension, it does most obviously. He as truly walked with God, as did the patriarch; in the same spirit, and in the same steps. In him the great principles of a Divine and heavenly life had place.

HE believed in God, "believed that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all those who diligently seek him." The apprehensions he imbibed of his perfections, and of his designs of love and mercy in Christ toward them who walk with him, were deep rooted, and habitually influential. He formed them, not merely or chiefly from the more obscure notices given of the Deity in his works of creation and providence; but from the more clear manifestations made of him by his Son. The whole revelation which this Divine Messenger brought down from heaven, and introduced into the world, was an object of his unshaken faith. And it gained, not only the assent of his understanding, but reached his heart. He so believed it, and all its interesting truths, as to be affected and influenced by them, according to their nature and importance.

By them his temper was formed, and his life regulated.

By them, through a Divine influence co-operating, he was brought nigh to God by sanctification, and walked with him.

UPON enquiry it may be seen, that he walked with God in every point of view.

HE did so in secret. It is true, none of us were witnesses of his secret transactions with the

Deity. But, considering his exemplariness in other parts of religion, would it not be a criminal breach of christian charity, to doubt of his having kept up a constant converse and communion with God in the closet, and in all the private walks of life? Doubtless, amidst all the works of God, he walked as with God, seeing and enjoying HIM, in every thing. He walked with God in the family, discharging the conjugal and paternal duties of it with all fidelity.

As a husband, he was most pleasant and kind; as a father, indulgent and tender. What prudent advices, and useful instructions, did his nearest connexions receive at his mouth! How soothing and reviving was his conversation to them in afflictive seasons! In a word—did he not lay himself out, to the utmost, to make them all virtuous, useful and happy?

He walked with God, as a minister of the gospel. He had a just sense of the importance of his sacred office, and magnified it. The great design of it, even the glory of God in the salvation of men, lay near his heart, and was an object he had constantly in view. For the advancement of this, he labored and did not faint; more especially among you, where God in his providence was pleased to place him. So deeply did he in-

terest himself in this most important design, that to promote it, he grudged no labor or pains, of which his health and strength would admit. Were you straitened in him? Did he withhold any thing which he thought might be an happy mean of influencing you to yield yourselves the true subjects of the gospel, and so sharing in it's glorious and happy effects? On the contrary, did he not "declare to you the whole counsel of God?" Did he not use his best endeavors to promote among you the most useful knowledge? Were not his discourses well adapted to possess your minds with worthy engaging views of the blessed God, and of the blessed Jesus? Did he not, with accuracy, point out, the gospel way to the Divine favor and heaven, through the mediation of Christ? In short, was he not at pains to enrich your understandings with the inestimable treasure of gospel-truths in general?

BUT he did not stop here, with feeding you with wisdom and understanding, or with communicating to you a good doctrinal knowledge of things sacred; but fain would he have diffused among you a true spirit of christianity. Most gladly would he have led you all to Christ, to a cordial submission to him in all his mediatorial

characters. To this end the art of persuasion was tried upon you. The promises, and threatenings, together with all the great motives of christianity, were from time to time held up to your view and dwelt upon, with that seriousness and animation, which the importance of prevailing upon you for your good to your salvation did require. All the springs of action implanted in the human breast, were applied to, tender seasons improved, and every promising method adopted. I dare appeal to you for the sincerity and earnestness of his endeavors to persuade you to shew yourselves men and christians. You cannot forget how constant, serious and fervent, his prayers were for you : how affectionate his entreaties and exhortations, when “ as an ambassador of Christ he besought you, in his stead, to be reconciled unto God.”

IN his walk with God as a minister, his *example*, as well as *preaching*, requires attention. This was of a tenor with his preaching ; yea, it was a kind of continual living sermon, co-operating with his public exhibitions, to persuade men to love and live to God. He, by the grace of God, maintained the rights of reason and conscience against the invasions of appetite and passion ; and acted up to the purity of the gospel. Sel-

dom, indeed, do good instructions, come more advantageously recommended, and enforced by their author's life and conversation, than did his. "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably he behaved himself among you." His life was an assemblage of all christian virtues and graces. By *some*, his character was more adorned than by *others*, but *none* were lacking.

IN him, meekness and gentleness did shine with a conspicuous lustre. The rougher passions seemed to have no power over him; while a meek, gentle, quiet spirit, which, "in the sight of God is an ornament of great price," he drank in and exhibited in the general course of his life. When he was reviled, he reviled not again, but was gentle to all men. He in meekness instructed those who opposed themselves, and blessed all by his prayers.

HUMILITY may be reckoned another eminent trait in his character. To haughty forbidding airs, and to all appearances of pride, he was a perfect stranger. So far was he from keeping his inferiors at a distance, as to be always easy of access, and his carriage free, familiar and pleasant. The knowledge he acquired, was not of the sort which puffeth up. He was, in the

opinion of those who knew him, a very uncommon instance of greatness and humility meeting in the same person.

WHAT a pattern was he of benevolence! he loved good men as such, and even extended his kind regards to those of a very different character, for he most heartily wished the happiness of all. And the graces that did not mark his character so deeply, were conspicuous enough in it, to every attentive observer.

How sober and temperate was he! The bodily appetites seemed uniformly governed by the noble principle of reason. Never was he known, I believe, to be guilty of great and criminal indulgences, or to transgress the laws of christian moderation.

He was peaceable. The pacific spirit of the gospel, he largely imbibed. He loved peace, and as much as in him lay, lived peaceably with all men.

He was pitiful. Misery with him was sacred.

He was catholic. Every party, as such, he disliked, and loved good men, indiscriminately, of all denominations. The engaging ornament of modesty shone bright in him. While he was glad to communicate and do good, he was not ambitious to display any superior greatness, or good-

ness. He was substantially good, without any appearances of sanctity.

How even was his temper and steady his deportment ! The same unaffected cheerfulness and sedateness appeared in him at all times, and upon all occasions. In the course of his ministry he went through some trying scenes, as you can witness ; but in every instance, acquitted himself with propriety and honor. The truth is, reason and grace had the ascendancy over passion ; hence, none of the things he suffered, *greatly* moved him.

A Similar evenness and steadiness marked his character as a friend. He himself not being ~~spot~~ the spirit of ungoverned disquieting passions, his friends ever found him the same agreeable companion, in a full enjoyment of himself and in a good capacity to enjoy them. And his friendship was easily procured and maintained, for where he discerned in any, true worth, he readily overlooked, not only little defects with respect to a proper decorum of behavior, but even considerable failures ; covering all with a mantle of love. And even in matters of opinion, he maintained the same kind of steadiness. He was not to be carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men. With him novel

indefensible tenets met with no reception. There are few men who are diligent and impartial enquirers after truth, as he was, and that lay their minds open to conviction, as he did, whose creed, for so long a period as his ministry, does not undergo a greater change than did his, in the same term of time. He was deliberate, suspended his judgment, weighed a thing, long and coolly; weighed it on all sides, before he formed his judgment, but having once formed it, he was not easily moved.

To all which I subjoin, he possessed a good measure of christian fortitude. To his "faith, he added virtue," or courage. Never was he known, I believe, through fear of man, to keep back in his preaching, any thing of great and essential importance to religion. Indeed, from prudential reasons, he did not, from the beginning of his ministry, make a business of inculcating certain sentiments of his, relating to some controversial, less important doctrines of our religion. But upon his affairs taking such a turn, as led him to think it was time to speak, he, at the hazard of his reputation as a clergyman, and consequently of his living, stood forth, and held those sentiments up to view, in, I believe, a full and undis-

guised manner, and the event was happy. But I may not be more particular.

AFTER all that hath been said in favor of the excellent man, I would not be thought to imagine that he, while here, attained to perfection. Of this I have no idea. Perfection is the prerogative of heaven, not of earth. Sacred history tells us of the "spirits of just men being made perfect" *there*, not *here*.

No question your late worthy pastor, while he was yet with us, was deeply sensible of many weaknesses and imperfections, both considered as a christian and a minister. Yea, it may be, that he was conscious of some real faults and follies, for which he needed mercy from God, and charity from men. It was well if he did not sometimes fail, as to the virtues by which his character was most distinguished. If he did not, he was the only instance, perhaps, of this sort, that can be produced. But notwithstanding; it is true of him, he walked with God, so as to please him and be accepted of him, thro' the atoning sacrifice of the great Redeemer. The character belonged to him in the same qualified sense, that it did to other great and good persons, of whom we read in the book of God: in the same qualified sense that it did to Zacharias and Elizabeth, of whom

it is said "that they were both righteous before God, walking in all his ordinances and commandments, blameless."—*Luke 1. 6.*

IN what I have been saying concerning our dear departed friend, our attention has been principally confined to his *morals*. To these the subject naturally led me. It may, however, be expected, upon this occasion, that some notice be taken of his *parts* and *erudition*. Upon this head, I would therefore offer something very briefly.

THE God of nature was liberal in his donations to him, furnishing him with strong mental powers. His natural strength of genius was, no doubt, considerably above what is common to men. And being favored with a liberal education and with many happy privileges for accumulating knowledge, which he made the best of, he even, in early life, became very respectable as a man of learning. Few were more capable of shining as an original writer; perhaps none, as a controversial one. I must limit my observations mainly to his accomplishments as a Divine.

HE was a graceful speaker, in the opinion of all proper judges, a good pulpit orator. His voice was not loud, but clear and audible, soft and pleasing, even to the most delicate ear. His

delivery was not vehement, but grave, serious and affectionate—at times *very* affectionate. He was possessed of tender affections, and could address the passions with good success; with the better success, as his application to them was natural, and without art. His sermons were excellent, adapted to the lowest capacities, and yet instructive to the highest, admirably calculated to diffuse light and real goodness. The style easy and natural; clear and striking; not very elevated and flowery, nor low and flat; the perspicuity of it can never be too much admired. His fancy was lively, his invention fruitful; enabling him to pray with ease, pertinence and variety, on all occasions. His judgment was solid and penetrating. This seems to have been his predominant power. While the rest were excellent, this surpassed them all. Ideas lay clear in his mind; and in his compositions were nicely arranged. His arguments were well chosen, and managed to the greatest advantage; hence, in the opinion of the best judges, he was an excellent composuist. His publications in general, and more especially those upon which he bestowed much labor, are, as I conceive, masterly productions, ingenious enough to do honor to the most dignified prelate in Christendom. The more

they are read, and the better they are understood, so much the more they are esteemed. In a word, his greatness and his virtues set him in a conspicuous point of view, and gained him the esteem and love of mankind. They indeed, who knew him best, loved him most. And I can hardly think that any good man, upon a thorough acquaintance with his character, could have denied him a particular place in his affections. Those words primarily addressed to the prophet Daniel, do eminently apply to him.—“O man greatly beloved.” I can dwell no longer upon this agreeable theme.

UPON a general review of this engaging portrait, sundry things, both seasonable and useful, offer themselves to our thoughts; a few of which give me leave now to point out.

HENCE you see, and in a light truly affecting, your obligations, as a society, of love and gratitude to God. A good minister, of but ordinary gifts, is a rich blessing to a people. The richness of the blessing, however, must rise in proportion to the minister's accomplishments, and consequently, a people's obligation of love and thankfulness to him from whom comes every good gift. How then should your hearts ascend to God in pious affections and thank-

givings for sending you your late pastor, and protracting his ministry among you for so many years !

AGAIN, the character necessarily awakens in us a high estimation of the greatness of the loss sustained, and prompts us cordially to condole with the mourning family, &c. Were there nothing distinguishing in their departed friend, we could do no less than pity them, and drop over them the sympathetic tear. How then should we now feel for, and our bowels yearn over them !

WILL you then, my dear friends, permit me to address you in a few words. How hard do you find parting with so worthy a character, with whom you have lived in the most entire friendship, and in the sweetest interchange of all kind offices ! Is it not like rending a limb from the body ? But I forbear, for I do not wish to renew your grief, by laying open a wound too tender to admit of the gentlest touch, without painful sensations. You have need of patience. And may that God, who is stiled love, and of whom we are assured that he is very pitiful to them that are afflicted and cast down, compassionate your condition, and furnish you with the grace of patience and every other grace which your afflicted state

requires. While you employ your thoughts upon such considerations as are best adapted to afford relief; may the Spirit of Almighty God let them home upon your hearts, and may your affliction have the most salutary and happy effects: may it yield you the peaceable fruits in this life, and prove the means of your rising high in the scale of future blessedness.

I would further observe, that this striking character is adapted to awaken in your minds, my brethren of this society, a pleasing remembrance of your past friendship to your minister.

CONSIDERING what he was; a recollection of your kind treatment of him during the whole course of his ministry, must afford you pleasure, such acts especially as were eminently expressive of love and friendship. Will you allow me to point out one or two of this kind? Notwithstanding the great and good things that formed the character of this man of God, time was, when the clouds thickened about him, and his affairs put on a most threatening gloomy aspect. I refer to the time when a cry of heresy was raised against him, and a formidable combination attacked him, consisting of persons well meaning, but strangely misguided. Did you then pity him, assist and encourage him in those noble

exertions which brought him off with honor, to the establishment of his character and to the disappointment and confusion of his opponents? And very lately, when he was sinking under the weight of years and bodily infirmities, so that all hope of his being further useful in a public capacity was taken away, did you then comfort his heart, and revive his sinking spirits, by securing to him an honorable support through life? What a sensible pleasure does the remembrance of these kindnesses to your friend now afford you; especially when viewed in connexion with the worthiness of his character!

ENCOURAGED by this recent instance of your kindness, suffer me to exhort you, that you do not leave off your kindness to the dead; but continue it, by shewing kindness to the living; I mean to the surviving relatives of your deceased pastor. You cannot but feel for them, when you consider what a friend they have lost, not only one who in his own person was most engaging, but one to whom they looked up, as under God, the great Source of their comfortable subsistence. Let not your compassion be of the useless kind, shewing itself merely in good words and wishes, but let it be useful, expressing itself in kind offices and beneficent acts. Your and

their late venerable relation can receive no further help from you in these ways, but these his friends may, who were dear to him, next to his own soul. Will you not do them good, for his sake? So long as DR. TUCKER's memory is dear to you, can you forget his family, more especially her who stood in the nearest relation to him! May your benefactions be such as to come up for a memorial before God. May they entitle you to the blessing given Boaz. "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead." *Ruth. 2. 20.*

I may also observe, the character points out the duty of mourning, and may serve, instead of a thousand arguments, to persuade us to the practice of it.

Not to lay to heart the death of so great and so good a character, would favor of a stupid, unchristian temper, which God forbid you should possess. It was a prevailing custom, if not a law in Israel, to carry their mourning high indeed upon such occasions. When a person, who stood distinguished for a first character, made his exit, there was every appearance of grief, and many times much of the reality. The first christians gave into the custom. Do we not read, that devout men carried St. Stephen to his burial and made

great lamentations over him? Beside, reason favors the practice, if not carried too high.—Should you not then indulge to grief? Do not treat the providence as a slight correction. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, with weeping and mourning; but at the same time, beware that you do not exceed.

THE truth is, the afflictive dispensation hath a bright as well as dark side. In one view, it calls to mourning, while in the other it seems rather to call to rejoicing. When we consider your pastor as in a qualified sense, a finished character, a great blessing to the world, by diffusing truth and righteousness; turning away wrath and drawing down Divine blessings—in this view of the matter, we may well mourn for him, or rather for ourselves. Our hearts can be scarcely too deeply penetrated with grief. But upon turning our attention to the bright side of the dispensation and considering for a moment, the alleviating circumstances attending it, we immediately find our minds comforted and our tears dried up. Among these the easiness of his passage out of this world may deserve just mentioning. He escaped those terrible pains and convulsions which the generality of good men undergo in their last moments. The presump-

tion is, that he found himself in the world of spirits, without being sensibly hurt. It may admit of doubt, whether he underwent more in the very finishing scene of life, than Enoch did in his translation. The Patriarch, it must be supposed, experienced a change, something similar to what they will undergo who shall be found alive at the coming of Christ. This, as is imagined, will be attended with ease, which no doubt it will in a comparative sense; but yet it may be as distressing to nature as to go away in sleep, without being sensible of the smallest injury.

ANOTHER alleviating consideration is, that the good man had exceeded what is usually called the common boundary of human life, and lived until his disorders of body became such as to quite incapacitate him for any further public service for God or his generation. But the most comfortable consideration of all is, GOD hath taken him. This, alone, is enough to suppress all excesses of grief; yea, it must and ought to make joy spring up in sorrow. And it does, as to every mourner here present. It is with heartfelt gladness that you lift up your eyes to the everlasting hills, and consider your friend as a bright inhabitant of the celestial world. With what comfort and pleasure do you follow him, in

your thoughts, to those glorious regions, that safe retreat from all the storms and tempests of this : there forever to be freed from all evil things, from all temptations and sorrows, from all pains of body and mind, and exulting in happiness, a happiness which lately had a beginning, but will know no end : a happiness adequate to his largest capacities, and that will run parallel with the line of eternity !

✓ AND you may, I think, with delight, consider him in the exercise of that spirit of benevolence which so distinguished his character while here, as expecting with pleasure your speedy arrival where he is, to live again with him in the sweetest fellowship and communion, and to share the inestimable blessings of the Redeemer's purchase.

LET me add. The character that now engages our pleasing attention, should sweetly allure us to an imitation of it, that we may be prepared to follow our deceased friend. This seems to be the most important point of instruction. To do this, would be to make a proper improvement of the character. Permit me, then, earnestly to entreat you to copy the example of him, whom you so justly esteemed, and prepare to follow him into the world of retribution. Walk with God,

as he did; elevate your views above this world, and live by faith, lead the life of heaven, here on earth. As a stimulus, have your eyes much to the charming example. And you would do well, often to enter into a serious and deep recollection of the doctrines and duties he taught you, together with the motives by which he enforced them. Do not forget, my hearers, that you must account at the impartial tribunal of Christ, for the manner in which you improve the example of this his servant, and for the instructions he hath given you.

WERE your ascended pastor permitted to address you, from those happy seats, where he now dwells, would he not say, "prepare, O my dear friends—prepare to put off your bodies and follow me? Imitate my example, as far as I did that of Christ, and so weigh and lay to heart the interesting doctrines and instructions with which I followed you for many years, as yet to make me an instrument of your salvation?" How happy would be the final result of acting upon such advice! how happy to yourselves, and to your pious departed minister! how would he rejoice over, and with you, at the second appearance of the Lord Jesus, that he had not, with ref-

pect to you the dear people of his charge "run in vain, nor labored in vain!"

I cannot close, without just observing what you all well know, that your present condition, on some accounts, is unhappy. "You are as sheep, not having a shepherd," exposed to the attacks of designing men; and of falling into strife, and divisions among yourselves; to the wounding religion, and the great injury of your best interest. All the well wishers to Zion among us, are full of concern for you. Do, my hearers, be concerned for yourselves, and watch, guard, and pray that you may escape the evils which threaten you. Study the things which make for peace, harmony, sweetness of temper. In the important affair of the re-settlement of a gospel-minister, conduct with the utmost lenity and prudence. Let nothing be done through strife, or vain glory, but manage the whole matter in the exercise of that meekness, condescension and love, which have been so long, and so well exemplified to you in the life of your deceased friend. And while you are not wanting to yourselves in the exercise of wisdom, prudence and charity, be looking beyond yourselves, to the Father of light and mercy, and depending upon him, to over-rule and guide you in the choice of

a minister. Yea, be importunate in your prayers to God, to guide you to the man, who will be an instrument in his hand, of promoting truth, righteousness and holiness among you. In this way, you may hope for a blessing. That it will please the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of the spirits of all flesh, to set a man over the church and congregation here, who will be an inestimable blessing to you, and your children.

FINALLY, BRETHREN, FAREWELL,
BE PERFECT, BE OF GOOD COM-
FORT, BE OF ONE MIND,
LIVE IN PEACE, AND
THE GOD OF LOVE
AND PEACE
SHALL BE
WITH
YOU.

A M E N.

THE FOLLOWING CHARACTER OF THE
REV. DR. TUCKER, DRAWN BY ANO-
THER HAND, IS TAKEN FROM THE
PUBLIC PRINTS; AND HERE ADDED,
BY PARTICULAR DESIRE.

Newbury Old-Town, April 2, 1792.

E A R L Y on the morning of the 22d. ult. departed this life, the Rev. Dr. JOHN TUCKER, in the 73d year of his age, and 47h of his ministry.—On the 26th he was interred, with the highest marks of respect, and warm attachment. Beside his dearest connexions, and an affectionate church and people, he was attended to the house of God and the grave, by the Trustees, Preceptor and Pupils of Dummer Academy, and many of the neighbouring clergy and gentry. Previous to the interment, a solemn and affectionate sermon, was preached by the Rev. Mr. WEBSTER of Salisbury, his friend and companion in age, and the ministry.

It pleased the great Author of every good gift, to afford him a large capacity of mind. His apprehension was clear, imagination lively, and judgment sound. Although his constitution was slender, and health feeble, through a great part of

life, yet he was able, for many years, to pursue his studies with great closeness and attention. Hereby, his natural accomplishments were strengthened and improved; and being sanctified by the grace of God, he was eminently fitted for that important station, in which he was placed, and of which, for more than forty-six years, he was so great and bright an ornament. Being thus furnished with so large a share of knowledge, human and Divine, he with great propriety and fidelity, discharged the different parts of the ministerial office.

In prayer he greatly excelled. His prayers were serious and pathetic, pertinent and various.

His discourses were accurate and sensible, but perspicuous and instructive, and adapted to the meanest capacities. He was a diligent enquirer after truth. He called no man Rabbi, for one was his Master, in heaven, even Christ. What say the oracles of God? was his enquiry; his opinions in religion resulted therefrom. These did, no doubt, in some things, differ from the world at large: and while his mind was too fair and upright, to disguise them, yet he conducted with great prudence, and did not think himself obliged openly and publicly to proclaim them. But when, from certain circumstances in providence, it became necessary he should be more explicit, nothing could prevent him from honestly declaring them.

He sat down and counted the cost. And though he could not but think he must be exposed to much obloquy and reproach; and though, at that period, his situation in domestic life, was such, as might have subjected him to great difficulties, yet he consulted not with flesh and blood, but preached plainly, what he believed. In this trying situation, we beheld the man.

Although he felt his trials, yet as his conscience justified his principles and conduct, and as he knew he was accountable to his Maker for what he believed and taught; that by his unerring judgment he was to be tried, and by him hoped to be approved, he possessed his mind with firmness and peace, and rose superior to all his difficulties.

This did not, however, render him inactive.—Placed in such circumstances, he thought it his duty to exercise the abilities with which God had blessed him, and that, for vindicating his character and opinions, and setting them in a just light.

When then he engaged in controversy, he reasoned in a strong and masterly, but cool and dispassionate manner: and thought it allowable to indulge his natural humor, and that vein of satire, which he in a great degree possessed; and which he would not have given scope to, but to put enthusiasm, superstition and bigotry out of countenance; and

shew those to themselves, who, under pretence of honoring God, had a zeal, without knowledge, a valor, without discretion; and who, while they apprehended they were doing service to the cause of religion, were smiting a fellow christian. And it had a most happy effect. It fixed him in the affection of his people, procured him the esteem of the learned, judicious and liberal, and he triumphed over all opposition. The corporation of Harvard University, from their knowledge and esteem of his character for piety and literature, honored him and themselves, by giving him a diploma for a doctorate in divinity.

His conversation and life were truly exemplary.

He was favored with a most ~~excellent~~ disposition; his temper was remarkably placid and even. And being possessed of a rational and solid piety, it influenced his whole conduct; gave a consistency and uniformity to his character, and made him appear amiable in all relations of life. He was the kind husband—the tender parent—the affectionate friend and agreeable companion. He appeared to the greatest advantage in his public and ministerial, as well as private and christian character. He was an example of believers, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity: Possessed a tender concern for the happiness of his flock, and,

excellent

while health would permit, visited, instructed and comforted them. And they were his witnesses, how holily, justly and unblameably he behaved himself among them. This was indeed so conspicuous, that even those who differed from him in sentiment, could not but acknowledge it. He could therefore, in the day of trial, with the greatest cheerfulness and confidence (though with a temper far from boasting) appeal to them, as to his doctrine and life; that he had aimed to promote pure and undefiled religion—lived what he taught, and never spared himself, to promote their best interest. And when allowances are made for the frailties and imperfections of human nature, there was scarcely any one whose life was more irreproachable.

It pleased God for some years to make sickness his constant monitor; and for the last months of his life, to take him wholly off from his public labors. This he submitted to with great patience and resignation, as from the hand of God. His trials prepared him for the important change—ripened him for the heavenly inheritance; his loins were girt, and his lamp burning; and when called at midnight, he was ready, and silently passed to the joy of his Lord.